

CEO E-Briefing

A weekly report to City Council and the community

August 19, 2011

No. 9



The weekly special: Costa Mesa!

With no City Council study session or second meeting scheduled in August, I've carved out some time to set daily challenges aside and reflect on what makes Costa Mesa special.

On my incomplete list is, in no particular order: the world's shopping mecca, **South Coast Plaza**; **Orange Coast College**, the best community college in California; two of the nation's premiere cultural venues, the **Segerstrom Center for the Arts** and **South Coast Repertory** theater; the wonderfully eclectic **E. 17th Street** for shopping, services and dining ...

The ever-changing **Orange County Fair and Event Center**; residents who are as loyal to their neighborhoods as they are to their alma maters (if you want to start a lively debate, get a **Mesa Verde** and **Eastside** resident together and ask who lives in a better part of town); two high schools that are thriving like never before; ...

Shaheen Sadeghi's cutting-edge **The Camp** and **The Lab** developments; the City's thriving youth sports scene; the revamped **SoCo Collection** along the 405 Freeway; the revived **Triangle Square**; the nationally renowned surfwear and music industries; the award-winning restaurants; the natural wonders of **Fairview Park**; the summer **Concerts in the Park**; and the list goes on.

I'd argue that no town Costa Mesa's size offers so much. And that's important to remember as August turns into September and our world speeds up again. We have many challenges ahead of us, but we are fortunate to be operating from a position of strength. We serve a remarkable city.

Tom Hatch, chief executive officer, City of Costa Mesa

P.S. The graphic above is a prototype of a series of bumper stickers promoting various city neighborhoods. More later.

On the calendar this week

- Aug 19** **TODAY** The inaugural **Costa Mesa Restaurant Week** begins next Friday! During the 8-day event, diners will get some incredible bargains at a wide range of Costa Mesa restaurants, with prix fixe menus starting at \$10.11 for lunch and \$19.11 for dinner.
- Aug 20** **SATURDAY** Tour the City's parks with its commissioners ... See schedule [here](#).
- Aug 22** **MONDAY** The **Planning Commission** meets at 6 p.m. in the Council chambers ... You can read the agenda [here](#).

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☒ **Comments**

or suggestions, please contact wlobdell@ci.costa-mesa.ca.us



CEO's Office

Costa Mesa's website earns an A+ for transparency from national watchdog group



Budget	✓
Meetings	✓
Elected Officials	✓
Administrative Officials	✓
Permits, zoning	✓
Audits	✓
Contracts	✓
Lobbying	✓
Public records	✓
Local taxes	✓
✓ PRESENT	
✗ MISSING	
○ INCOMPLETE	

The **Sunshine Review**—a national nonprofit watchdog group dedicated to “bringing state and local government to light”—this week awarded an A+ transparency grade for the quantity and quality of public information available on the City of Costa Mesa's **website**.

Only 112 out of the more than 6,000 municipal websites reviewed by the Sunshine Review earned the A+ rating, putting Costa Mesa in the top 1% of city websites for transparency. You can see Costa Mesa's latest review **here**.

“Costa Mesa going from an 'F' to an 'A+' website transparency grade is a real transformation,” said Kristin McMurray, managing editor of the Sunshine Review. “It's what all citizens should expect of their local government, and Costa Mesa went above and beyond by creating their local salary database.”

Supreme Court to rule on fate of redevelopment agencies

The **California Supreme Court** last week agreed to hear a petition that challenged the constitutionality of recent legislation that would eliminate redevelopment agencies unless those agencies paid the state to keep operating. For Costa Mesa, the initial fee to the state would be \$1.4 million to keep its **Redevelopment Agency**—a move that the **City Council** is scheduled to consider at its Sept. 6 meeting.

The Court also provided redevelopment agencies a stay from making payments until the petition is ruled upon.

On Wednesday, the **League of California Cities** and **California Redevelopment Assn.** (CRA) issued a joint Q&A guidance document concerning the scope of the Supreme Court's August 10 stay in the redevelopment lawsuit.

You can read it **here**.

Notes from the CEO's Office



The video production team of **Dane Bora** and **Brad Long** put together in just a few hours a **top-quality commercial** to promote the inaugural **Costa Mesa Restaurant**

Week, which begins today ... And you can check out the final episode of this year's **@thefair** with



our **Dane Bora** and the OC Fair's **Steve Beazley here** ... Please welcome **Amber Kent** (pictured), a temporary employee in the CEO's Office who will be working with **Kelly Shelton** and the City Council members ... Interim Asst. CEO **Terry Matz's** last day with us was Wednesday ... He did an excellent job helping with the analysis of the Orange County Fire Authority proposal, along with many other tasks over the past six months ... Enjoy the golf courses, Terry!

Secret Spot

Somewhere in Costa Mesa you might recognize this bit of local scenery.

Hint: Go east and you'll be in the neighborhood

To get the whole picture, see **page 5**.



Administrative Services

Fall recreation guide available online

The City's Fall 2011 Recreation Guide, featuring 27 pages of activities for the young, old and everyone in between, is available online [here](#). Among the offerings: adult hip-hop dance classes, youth swim lessons, and senior softball.



Saturday in park with the City's commissioners

The City of Costa Mesa **Parks and Recreation Commission** will offer a **park tour** on Saturday that will provide residents an opportunity to meet with commissioners and provide input about the parks. The informal gathering will begin at 9 a.m., and 30 minutes will be spent at each park. Here are the starting times for each park:

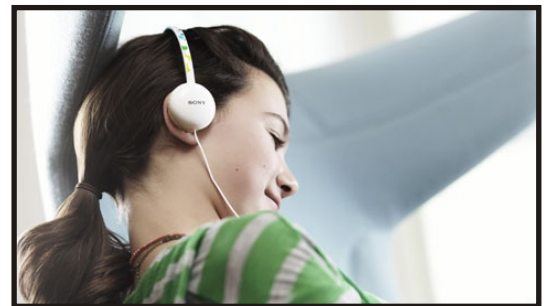


Fairview Park	9 a.m.
Vista Park	9:40 a.m.
Canyon Park	10:20 a.m.
Marina View Park	11 a.m.
Shalimar Park	11:40 a.m.
Lions Park	12:20 p.m.
Hamilton Community Garden	1 p.m.
Ketchum-Libolt Park	1:40 p.m.
Wilson Park	2:20 p.m.

Development Services

Special meeting of Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency may be called

Because of the complex issues surrounding the California Supreme Court's action regarding the state's redevelopment agencies (see page 2), the Costa Mesa Redevelopment Agency may hold a special meeting on Friday, Aug. 26 or Monday, Aug. 29. The meeting would be to discuss and take action on the whether to pay the \$1.4 million fee to the state required by new legislation (which is being challenged in court). The payment schedule must be submitted to the County Auditor-Controller, the State Controller's Office and the State Department of Finance by August 29.



Sony in South Coast Plaza to get \$530,000 remodel

Sony in South Coast Plaza recently submitted a request for a plan check review for 5,828-square-foot worth of interior tenant improvements, including the construction of non-load bearing walls, new ceilings, new finishes and all related mechanical, electrical and plumbing detail. The exterior work comprises parking lot re-striping and compliance with the accessibility requirements. The interior and exterior improvements are valued at \$530,000.



Fire Department

Wanted: A few good fire explorers



The **Costa Mesa Fire Department** is looking for young adults, ages 16 to 21, who are interested in becoming fire explorers, a perfect first step in a career as a fire-fighter.

Fire explorers, who must maintain a 2.0 GPA while in the program, will gain

personal confidence, learn to use various tools, develop mechanical skills and aptitude, and gain a greater awareness of personal and fire safety. Many graduates of the Costa Mesa Explorer Post go on to finish at the top of their class in the fire academy and many have been hired on with various municipal fire departments. For more information, click [here](#). To sign up, click [here](#).

As for a bit of history, the Costa Mesa Fire Explorer Post was established in the late 1960s. For unknown reasons, it became inactive in the 1970's. Then, in 1996 the Post was re-established. Since that time, it has been active with weekly training meetings taught by career firefighters, and some explorers earn the ability to ride along. The Post has always been involved in the community by helping out with the Public Safety Expo's, Neighbors for Neighbors project, Fire Department Open House, OC Marathon, OC Fair booth, and several other local events.

OC Register profiles Capt. Plugencio's mission in Iraq

The **Orange County Register** story this week about **Costa Mesa Fire Capt. Bruce Plugencio** begins:

It was pitch black in the Iraqi desert. No moonlight and zero illumination.

Bruce Plugencio only had night vision goggles to see the landing zone and set down his 10-ton Black Hawk helicopter. A dust cloud began to form behind the aircraft 100 feet above ground, and before too long it caught up to the tight formation.

Then: brown out.

Plugencio was flying blind. He entered into a "controlled crash landing" to deliver a group of 11 special forces soldiers to their mission.

You can read the entire story [here](#).

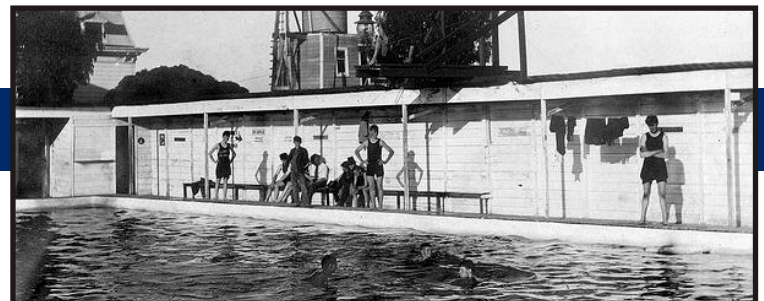


OC Register photo by Sam Gangwer

Making History

This photo depicts:

- A. Costa Mesa's first swimming club.
- B. Costa Mesa's first country club.
- C. The Fairview Hot Springs Hotel.
- D. The estate of Diego Mesa.



Answer: C. Fairview Hot Springs Hotel—on the grounds of what's now Orange Coast College—was a popular Southern California draw with its hot springs and mud baths until the Long Beach earthquake of 1933 shifted the ground and shut off Costa Mesa's natural hot springs. (Photo of hotel's entrance circa 1890; photo of hotel's hot springs pool circa 1909.)

Police Department



Sign up for emergency notifications to your cell or e-mail

Residents are encourage to register their cell phones and e-mail addresses on [AlertCM](#), a citywide mass notification system that keeps Costa Mesa residents and businesses informed during emergencies. The system also allows information to be streamlined only to affected neighborhoods.

The city is asking the community to register [here](#). Any listed primary residential and business landline phone numbers in Costa Mesa are automatically enrolled in the system.

However, community members can choose to add up to three phone numbers and two e-mail addresses to the database and receive emergency information via text messages to cell phones, PDAs, and e-mail accounts. They can also opt to have information delivered through special receiving devices (TTY/TDD) for the hearing impaired.

Why



is it important to register?

The City of Costa Mesa will utilize AlertCM to inform you of what action is necessary to take when there is an emergency affecting the health or welfare of you and your loved ones.



Public Services



Concrete evidence of a job well done!

Construction was completed on two residential alleys adjacent to Ford Road and Parsons Street. The concrete alleys were completed last week, and crews are finalizing the last details that will provide a maintenance-free surface for at least the next 50 years.

This project was completed on schedule and under budget. Due to budget savings on this project the City will be adding an additional 272 square feet of new concrete sidewalks and more than 700 square feet of concrete driveway improvements to the scope of the original contract.

This project was funded with federal Community Development Block Grant funds. For further information, please contact **Ernesto Munoz**, city engineer, at (714) 754-5335.

Secret Spotted

At the corner of Santa Ana Avenue and Costa Mesa Street in Eastside Costa Mesa, you find a unique home that features Victorian architecture, a wrap-around porch and whimsical touches such as its swirling chimney and a pond and spa in the basement. The property is on the market for \$1,359,000.